



**United Spinal  
Association**

[www.unitedspinal.org](http://www.unitedspinal.org)

September 5, 2018

The Honorable Ajit Pai  
Chairman  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20554

**RE: *Accelerating Wireline Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment*, WC Docket No. 17-84; *Accelerating Wireless Broadband Deployment by Removing Barriers to Infrastructure Investment*, WT Docket No. 17-79**

Chairman Pai:

On behalf of United Spinal Association, I am writing in support WC Docket No. 17-84 and WT Docket No. 17-79, which look to simplify broadband densification and provide support for the next generation of accessible technology. This could pave the way for 5G, a dramatically faster and incredibly responsive wireless standard. While there are already many available connected devices, this technology could bring many more online, and therefore facilitate independent living. It could support connected wheelchairs with remote diagnostics. Connected wayfinding devices could give users a holistic understanding of their surroundings, providing better guidance for everyday activities.

United Spinal Association is the largest non-profit organization, founded by paralyzed veterans, dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of all people living with spinal cord injuries and disorders (SCI/D), including veterans, and providing support and information to loved ones, care providers and professionals. United Spinal has over 70 years of experience educating and empowering almost 2 million individuals with SCI/D to achieve and maintain the highest levels of independence, health and personal fulfillment. United Spinal has over 50,000 members, approximately 50 chapters, close to 200 support groups and more than 100 rehabilitation facilities and hospital partners nationwide including 10 distinguished Spinal Cord Injury Model System Centers that support innovative projects and research in the field of SCI. United Spinal Association is also a VA-recognized veterans service organization (VSO) serving veterans with disabilities of all kinds.

5G could also enhance access to transportation. Limited mobility has economic and social repercussions. Driverless cars could provide Americans with disabilities with the autonomy they crave, enhancing inclusion. Through remote monitoring, physicians could rapidly respond to concerns and assess patients without time-consuming on-site appointments. 5G can provide prescription monitoring and facilitate telehealth visits with real-time imaging. The infrastructure investment in these advanced communication technologies would be vital to improving the lives and independence of people with disabilities. Better wireless technology could transform medicine in telehealth, where our members, as well as the broader disability community of 57 million, would be able to get 24 hour care at home. With improved latency through more robust infrastructure, doctors can better treat telehealth patients at home without potentially putting patients at risk by forcing them to leave their homes.

We are committed to ensuring that United Spinal Association members and the broader disability community have the ability to maintain their independence, can achieve personal fulfillment and are able to actively participate in society. 5G networks could provide new waves of opportunity to the disability community. United Spinal Association urges that the Federal Communications Commission work to improve the infrastructure that would pave the way for advanced communication technology. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Alexandra Bennewith, Vice President, Government Relations, at [abennewith@unitedspinal.org](mailto:abennewith@unitedspinal.org) or (202) 556-2076, x7102.

Sincerely,

James Weisman, Esq.  
President and CEO  
United Spinal Association